

Research Finding...



A guaranteed and viable curriculum is the #1 school-level factor impacting student achievement.

-- Marzano, *What Works in Schools*

Good curriculum comes first.

"There is no such thing as effective differentiation devoid of a high quality curriculum...The teacher's first job is always to ensure that the curriculum is coherent, important, inviting, and thoughtful. Then and only then does it make sense to differentiate that curriculum."

-- Carol Ann Tomlinson



A Mission Statement for a Foreign Language Program

"The overarching goal of this program of studies is to develop students who are sufficiently competent in [the target language] so that they can function effectively in the language and culture outside of the confines of the classroom."

Curriculum Philosophy

Grand Island Public Schools, NE
K-12 Social Studies Program Philosophy

The goal of social studies education is to prepare students to be responsible and productive citizens in a democratic society and a globally interdependent world. Through an integrated study of social studies disciplines, students will acquire necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes as they become lifelong learners.

Social Studies provides content that students will use to understand political, social, and economic issues and apply their knowledge and skills to make effective personal and public decisions. A standards based social studies curriculum builds knowledge of specific discipline content, thinking skills, commitment to democratic values, and citizen participation, all essential to maintaining a democratic way of life.

GIPS K-12 Social Studies Program Beliefs

- **All students learn through a variety of relevant experiences.**
Therefore, we will provide interactions that activate and build on prior knowledge and promote higher level thinking skills.
- **Research shows active learning is essential.**
Therefore, we will provide students with a variety of active, student centered, multi-sensory learning opportunities.
- **Instruction should be relevant, meaningful, and based on student needs.**
Therefore, we will provide opportunities for students to make connections to their own lives using a variety of instructional strategies.
- **The world is constantly changing.**
Therefore, we will provide the opportunities for students to understand that the present connects to the past and affects the future.

GIPS K-12 Social Studies Program Beliefs

- **We live in a culturally diverse society.**
Therefore, we will develop student understanding of diverse cultures that honors equality and human dignity.
- **Assessment should be ongoing, diagnostic, and aligned with instruction.**
Therefore, we will provide multiple authentic assessment tools.
- **The use of community resources is essential for effective instruction.**
Therefore, we will use the rich history and ethnic diversity of our community to enhance learning.
- **Active and informed citizen participation is essential to democracy.**
Therefore, we will provide instruction and curriculum designed to develop students who will be informed, active problem solvers, and willing participants in the democratic process.

Our Conception...



**Curriculum =
a plan for achieving
your learning goals**

**Curriculum \neq
not a list of topics
and related activities**

What is a “discipline”?

“Many people erroneously think of academic disciplines as the ‘content,’ but that is not what a “discipline” is. Science is a ‘discipline’ because the habit of jumping to conclusions based on prior beliefs runs deep in human beings (and novice scientists), and is overcome only through the “discipline” of trying to isolate key variables, and methodically testing for them. You have to learn the “discipline” of carefully observing, gathering apt evidence, and weighing its limited implications while remaining skeptical...

The so-called scientific method is not a ‘skill’ but a set of dispositions, skills, and transfer abilities in the use of content, learnable only by doing. Similarly, the goal in learning to ‘do’ history is to avoid present-centeredness and simplistic causal reasoning. One must learn to think and act like a journalist/curator/ historian to learn the ‘discipline’ of history. Learning only the factual ‘content’ or highly-scripted ‘skills’ is as little likely to make you ‘disciplined’ as merely practicing discrete moves in basketball will equip you to be a successful game player.”

-- Wiggins and McTighe, *Schooling by Design*

research on

Learning and Cognition



“We turn now to the questions of how experts’ knowledge is organized... Their knowledge is not simply a list of facts and formulas that are relevant to the domain; instead, their knowledge is organized around core concepts or ‘big ideas’ that guide their thinking about the domain.”

-- Bransford, et. Al., *How People Learn*, p 24

Essential Question ?

To what extent do we have a coherent curriculum... from the learner's perspective?

Program Area

Content Standards

Overarching Understanding(s)

Overarching Essential Question(s)

Cornerstone Assessments

Course 1

Course 2

Course 3

Course 4

unit 5

unit 5

unit 5

unit 5

New Hope-Solebury School District Social Studies Curriculum Framework		
Grade Level: 6 th Grade Course Title: Social Studies		
National and State Standards Guiding Program		
<p>National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)</p> <p>I. Culture</p> <p>a. Compare technologies and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures meet human needs and concerns</p> <p>c. Explain why academics and groups respond differently to state physical and social environments, and/or changes to them in the basis of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs</p> <p>II. Science, Technology, & Society</p> <p>1. Learning and using resources such as chemistry, geology, change, or other, use consistency in reports, and use, and know consequences of using, variety of historical change and knowledge</p> <p>VIII. Science, Technology, & Society</p> <p>a. Facilitate and describe the influence of culture on scientific and technological choices</p> <p>X. Civic Ideals & Practices</p> <p>a. Evaluate the impact and continuing influence of key ideals of the democratic and republican form of government</p>		
Enduring Understandings:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archaeologists learn about ancient human cultures by studying the artifacts left behind by those cultures. Early people survived by learning to work together and utilizing available resources appropriately. Technology includes all the tools, methods, and materials that people use to control and improve their lives. The culture of a society in the beliefs, customs, traditions, art, and achievements that are passed from one generation to another. Civilizations emerge as a result of 5 basic characteristics: a stable food supply, a form of government, specialization of labor, social levels, and a highly developed culture which includes art, architecture, religion, music, law, and a system of writing. Achievements from ancient civilizations have affected the modern world. The governments of ancient Greece and Rome have influenced the government of the United States. 		
Essential Questions:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How have historians and archaeologists learned about the ancient past? How do geographic factors affect and influence the rise of civilizations? What role has technology played in the rise of ancient civilizations? How did cities emerge? How did early people eventually create a stable food supply? What are the various forms of government and how did they affect ancient civilizations? What caused specialization of labor? How did social levels evolve? How does a culture become highly developed? How are the 5 characteristics of a civilization found in ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Greece, and Rome? 		
Content Topics	District	Key Skills
Unit 1: Archaeology, Early Man, and the Development of Societies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Comprehension Research Note taking Outlining, Brainstorming Oral Presentations Focused Writing Application/Analysis Map Making
Unit 2: Ancient Mesopotamia		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Quality Student Aid Organization Visual Graphic formats Essay writing Cooperative learning
Unit 3: Ancient Egypt		
Unit 4: Ancient India		
Unit 5: Ancient China		
Unit 6: Ancient Greece		
Unit 7: Ancient Rome		

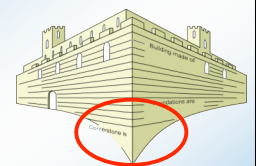


Clustering Standards, Benchmarks and Indicators

Enduring Understandings	Essential Questions	Indicators
Under "Big Ideas"	What are some ways to organize data?	4.3.1.1 gather and organize data from a variety of sources.
	How can the elements of a graph help people to understand and to interpret the data?	4.3.2.1 organize and display data using tables, pictographs, and bar graphs using appropriate scales, e.g., one symbol equals 100 units.
	How does changing the scale affect how data is communicated?	4.3.3.1 interpret and compare data from tables, pictographs, and bar graphs.
Organization of information shows relationships.	How can the next step in a pattern be found?	1.3.1.1 identify, describe, extend, and create a variety of non-numeric patterns.
	What strategies can be used for finding sums and differences?	1.3.1.2 identify, describe, extend, and create a variety of numeric patterns.
	Flexible methods of computation involve grouping numbers in a variety of ways.	6.3.5.2 subtract two- and three-digit numbers with regrouping.
The base 10 number system is based on groups of ten.	What strategies can be used to find sums and differences of whole numbers less than 1,000.	6.3.5.5 estimate sums and differences of whole numbers less than 1,000.
	What strategies can be used to read and compare large numbers?	6.3.1.3 express three- and four-digit numbers in expanded notation.
		6.3.1.1 read and write the word names for numbers to 10,000.
		6.3.2.2 compare and order whole numbers through 10,000.

corner-stone (n):

1. the first stone laid at a corner where two walls begin and form the first part of a new building



2. something that is fundamentally important to something



Cornerstone Assessments



- ✓ *Anchor the curriculum around important, recurring tasks.*
- ✓ *Require understanding and transfer of learning.*
- ✓ *Provide evidence of authentic accomplishments.*
- ✓ *Involve “doing the subject” and “playing the game”*

example:

World Languages



You have been selected by the members of the World Languages Club to plan their annual trip to two of the countries whose languages are studied in your school. You must plan an itinerary that will include at least five places of cultural and historic importance. You must include at least one site/activity that might be of particular interest to teenagers (e.g. Euro-Disney, a bull fight or a soccer game). Use public transportation wherever possible. Create a brochure to advertise the trip and be prepared to give a presentation to those students who may be interested in traveling with you.

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example:

Public Advocacy



After investigating a current political issue, write a letter to a public policy maker regarding the official's position on that issue. Assume that this public policy maker is opposed to your position. (Students will be provided documentation of public policy maker's position and background information.)

Your letter should present your opinion and attempt to persuade the public policy maker to vote accordingly.

Source: Littleton High School, CO

Anticipating Concerns



something to think about...



“High-stakes testing has radically altered the kind of instruction that is offered in American schools, to the point that ‘teaching to the test’ has become a prominent part of the nation’s educational landscape.”

Alfie Kohn

Troubleshooting Guide



- ✓ *What are the common/predictable misconceptions, skill deficits, or performance weaknesses?*
- ✓ *What specific approaches, strategies, and resources have proven successful in addressing these trouble spots?*
- ✓ *How might we share the wisdom of experts with all teachers?*

Troubleshooting Guide



- ☞ **Think: Software help**
- ☞ **Specific to particular topics/skills**
- ☞ **Built on expertise from teachers, curriculum specialists, special population experts, and researchers**
- ☞ **Web-based – readily accessible & expandable**